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# ENGINEER'S BOOKSHELF

## ARCHITECTURAL COMPOSITION

**Architectural Composition.** By Nathaniel Cortland Curtis, A. I. A., Professor of Architecture and Head of the School of Architecture in the Tulane University of Louisiana. Cloth 280 pages, one double plate with 270 illustrations 7 by 10 inches. J. H. Jansen, Cleveland, Ohio.

Reviewed by J. A. Kaltenbrum, '25

Professor Curtis, in this work, has avoided a lengthy discussion on the Elements of Composition, which have been thoroughly discussed in other books on this subject. Instead, the author has analyzed the plan as the most important consideration in his book. The reader of this book will notice that the author's study of this subject is considerably different than that of other American and English writers, who have placed the plan in a comparatively subordinate position.

With this idea in mind, Professor Curtis has given the most consideration to the plan. The plan always shows two dimensions of a building, which naturally implies the third dimension of a building. By looking at a plan one is led up by it, to thinking in three dimensions. As a notable architectural critic said: "Methods of study in plan have been adhered to at all times since the beginning of Architecture. . . . If the floor plan is well studied, beautiful in proportion, with a proper distribution of piers, thickness of walls, logically disposed and with good circulations, there will be no structural difficulties."

The author has not intended to bring to light any new ideas relating to the Theory of Architecture, nor has he sought to produce an impression of originality. However, he has presented a well-balanced study on architectural composition with respect to the plan, that is well worth the attention of all Architectural students.

## THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF WALTER H. PAGE

**The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page.** By Burton J. Hendrick. Two volumes. Doubleday, Page & Co. 1922.

Reviewed by J. K. Griffin, '26.

This is an excellent history of the great war as well as a biography of Page from his boyhood to 1918. The book is well arranged, and the material added by author himself, which usually consists of a brief summary of political events from time to time, gives the letters continuity and serves to bridge over the gaps. But the best feature is the style of the letters. These are written to the prominent men of the time in a man to man fashion, and discuss events and people quite frankly. His manner of expression, which would make the dullest of subjects interesting if applied to it, combined with his knowledge of men and states, has made this collection of letters unusually good reading, and distinguished him as one of the greatest letter writers of the generation. After you have become familiar with his style, you can turn to some unread portion of the book and immediately tell whether it is by Page or not, without referring to the signature, in the same way that you identify the work of your favorite illustrator. If you believe that international intrigue is exclusively reserved for serial movies, you should read what Page says. His letters describing England before the war and

the events leading up to our entrance in the war are more absorbing than fiction, and offer the public a means of getting a knowledge of the mysteries of diplomacy without straining its intellect, with thorough enjoyment at the same time.

## KANGAROO

**Kangaroo.** By D. H. Lawrence. 421 pages. New York: Thomas Seltzer. \$2.00. The Literary Digest International Book Review.

Though there is now a general rejoicing among the Philistines, priding themselves upon having at last, through constant abuse, converted Mr. D. H. Lawrence to a sense of the error of his ways, I am not at all sure of that conversion. In fact, I am not sure that Mr. Lawrence ever fell from grace. True, he has sinned against good taste—than which there can be, for the artist, no greater sin. But he is apt to do so again. In fact, again and again he does so here in his latest book.

There are whole paragraphs that seem to be nothing but drivel, that are utterly unintelligible, some evil heritage from Gertrude Stein. And there are, of course, those pæans in praise of the male; for Mr. Lawrence must continually assure us that he is masculine, that his are a man's reactions, that there will be no sentimental weakness in any book of his. He is not squeamish, effeminate, to be browbeaten. And to prove it he makes more than one reference to legs. He tells us over and over that it is a comfort to lay one's head upon a woman's breast, that there is such a thing as the lure of the flesh. But there is much besides, both in life and Kangaroo.

Mr. Lawrence is at once a poet and a historian, earnest, intent, thoughtful. He has discovered something, a great deal, wrong with the world; and he is doing his utmost to point out to us what he has found, to make us see things as he sees them—the injustice, the cruelty, the ugliness of things as they are.

He writes always as an esthete. He is of one mind with Dr. Havelock Ellis. He knows not whether things be right or whether things be wrong; he knows only when they are gracious, when they are hideous. But he is not so urbane as Dr. Ellis; he is not so patient. He must cry out against the oppression, the filth, the poverty he sees on every hand. It has been the same in all his books. He would set his fellows free. At first it was from the tyranny of sex, and in "Sons and Lovers" he pointed at least one way out, the way of escape. Then in his books on the unconscious, mocking Freud, he did his best to liberate us from the obsessions of dreams. Now in "Kangaroo" he has turned to the study of economics, to socialism, to the pioneer's hopes of Utopia. And he shows us how needlessly we obscure our vision, how we are governed by prejudice, and what a fine fellow the workingman is.

This is nothing new for Mr. Lawrence. Nor it is new for him that he should write his autobiography. All his books are autobiographical. He makes no pretense about it—he is speaking for himself. And he is well worth listening to.